

of about 2.7 g. The cover was heat sealed to one end of the absorbent web in a manner generally described in US Ser. No. [_____] 60/141688, filed June [__] 30, 1999, entitled "Sealing Roller and Sealing Roller Element, Particularly for Producing a Tampon for Feminine Hygiene and Method Therefore" (Attorney Docket, J&J-1819), and copending application US Ser. No. [_____] 09/343759, filed June [__] 30, 1999, entitled "Continuous Method of Providing Individual Sheets from a Continuous Web" (Attorney Docket, PPC-668). The covered web was then compressed in a tampon press, as generally described in Friese et al., US Ser. No. 07/596,454, filed October 12, 1990, and EP-B-0 422 660. The resulting tampons had a weight of between 2.55 and 3.2 g. During processing of this film, it was noted that the cover was heat-sealable without blocking the apertures and without melting them through, and that the heat-sealable apertured film did not adhere to the aperturing drum.

In the claims:

Claims 1, 7-9, 17, 18, 23, 29, 35, 42, 47, 52, and 55 are reproduced below, identifying the changes made.

1. (Amended) A wrapping element useful in absorbent articles, the wrapping element comprising fluid-impervious plastic material in the form of a resilient three-dimensional web exhibiting a fiber-like appearance and tactile impression, the fluid-impervious plastic material comprises a laminate having at least three layers:

a) a first outer layer[, forming a first outer surface of the laminate,] comprising a blend of at least two thermoplastic polymeric components, a continuous phase of a first thermoplastic polymeric

component that exhibits a first melting point temperature and a dispersed phase of an immiscible, second thermoplastic polymeric component that exhibits a second melting point temperature, less than the first melting point temperature, such that when the web is heated to a temperature between the first melting point temperature and the second melting point temperature, the second thermoplastic polymeric component is capable of forming an adhesive bond;

b) a second outer layer [forming a second outer surface of the laminate], opposite the first outer [surface] layer; and

c) at least one intermediate layer, disposed between the first and second outer layers,

wherein the web has first and second surfaces, the first surface defining a plane having a multiplicity of apertures therein and being defined at least in part by [the either] one of the first and second layers [and having a multiplicity of apertures therein], each of the apertures being defined by a multiplicity of intersecting fiber-like elements interconnected to one another substantially in the plane of the first surface, the web as defined by each of the fiber-like elements exhibiting a cross-section comprising a base portion in the plane of the first surface and a sidewall portion joined to [each edge of] the base portion, the sidewall portions extending generally in the direction of the second surface of the web, the [intersecting] sidewall portions being interconnected to one another intermediate the first and the second surfaces of the web[, the] to form interconnected sidewall portions terminating substantially concurrently with one another in [the] a plane [of] defined by the second surface.


7. (Amended) The wrapping element of claim 1 wherein the first layer comprises about 45 to about 95 wt-% of the first thermoplastic polymeric component and about 55 to about 5 wt-% of the second thermoplastic polymeric component.

8. (Amended) The wrapping element of claim 7 wherein the first layer comprises about 60 to about 80 wt-% of the first thermoplastic polymeric component and about 40 to about 20 wt-% of the second thermoplastic polymeric component.

9. (Amended) The wrapping element of claim 1 wherein the first layer further comprises one or more components selected from the group [comprising] consisting of antioxidants, UV absorbers, lubricants, antiblock agents, slip agents, plasticizers, nucleating agents, antistatic agents, flame retardants, pigments, dyes, and fillers.

17. (Amended) The wrapping element of claim 11 wherein the second layer comprises about 45 to about 95 wt-% of the first thermoplastic polymeric component and about 55 to about 5 wt-% of the second thermoplastic polymeric component.

18. (Amended) The wrapping element of claim 17 wherein the second layer comprises about 60 to about 80 wt-% of the first thermoplastic polymeric component and about 40 to about 20 wt-% of the second thermoplastic polymeric component.



23. (Amended) The wrapping element of claim 1 wherein the intermediate layer further comprises one or more components selected from the group [comprising] consisting of antioxidants, UV absorbers, lubricants, antiblock agents, slip agents, plasticizers, nucleating agents, antistatic agents, flame retardants, pigments, dyes, and fillers.

29. (Amended) A tampon comprising an absorbent structure substantially enclosed by a cover wherein (1) the cover comprises fluid-impervious plastic material in the form of a resilient three-dimensional web exhibiting a fiber-like appearance and tactile impression, (2) the fluid-impervious plastic material comprises a laminate having at least three layers:

a first outer layer[, forming a first outer surface of the laminate,] comprising a blend of at least two thermoplastic polymeric components, a continuous phase of a first thermoplastic polymeric component that exhibits a first melting point temperature and a dispersed phase of an immiscible, second thermoplastic polymeric component that exhibits a second melting point temperature, less than the first melting point temperature, such that when the web is heated to a temperature between the first melting point temperature and the second melting point temperature, the second thermoplastic polymeric component is capable of forming an adhesive bond;


a second outer layer [forming a second outer surface of the laminate], opposite the first outer [surface] layer; and

at least one intermediate layer, disposed between the first and second outer layers; and

(3) the web has first and second surfaces, the first surface defining a plane having a multiplicity of apertures therein and being defined at least in part by [the either] one of the first and second layers [and having a multiplicity of apertures therein], each of the apertures being defined by a multiplicity of intersecting fiber-like elements interconnected to one another substantially in the plane of the first surface, the web as defined by each of the fiber-like elements exhibiting a cross-section comprising a base portion in the plane of the first surface and a sidewall portion joined to each edge of the base portion, the sidewall portions extending generally in the direction of the second surface of the web, the [intersecting] sidewall portions being interconnected to one another intermediate the first and the second surfaces of the web[, the] to form interconnected sidewall portions terminating substantially concurrently with one another in [the] a plane [of] defined by the second surface.

35. (Amended) The tampon of claim 29 wherein the first layer comprises about 45 to about 95 wt-% of the first thermoplastic polymeric component and about 55 to about 5 wt-% of the second thermoplastic polymeric component.

42. (Amended) The tampon of claim 36 wherein the second layer comprises about 45 to about 95 wt-% of the first thermoplastic polymeric component and about 55 to about 5 wt-% of the second thermoplastic polymeric component.



47. (Amended) The tampon of claim 29 wherein the intermediate layer further comprises one or more components selected from the group [comprising] consisting of antioxidants, UV absorbers, lubricants, antiblock agents, slip agents, plasticizers, nucleating agents, antistatic agents, flame retardants, pigments, dyes, and fillers.

52. (Amended) A method of forming a wrapping element useful in absorbent articles, comprising the steps of:

forming a laminate having at least three layers having

a first outer layer[, forming a first outer surface of the laminate,] comprising a blend of at least two thermoplastic polymeric components, a continuous phase of a first thermoplastic polymeric component that exhibits a first melting point temperature and a dispersed phase of an immiscible, second thermoplastic polymeric component that exhibits a second melting point temperature, less than the first melting point temperature, such that when the web is heated to a temperature between the first melting point temperature and the second melting point temperature, the second thermoplastic polymeric component is capable of forming an adhesive bond; a second outer layer [forming a second outer surface of the laminate], opposite the first outer [surface] layer; and

at least one intermediate layer, disposed between the first and second outer layers;

applying fluid at a temperature greater than ambient temperature to the laminate while it is supported on a three-dimensional surface to form a resilient three-

dimensional web exhibiting a fiber-like appearance and tactile impression, wherein the web has first and second surfaces, the first surface defining a plane having a multiplicity of apertures therein and being defined at least in part by [the either] one of the first and second layers [and having a multiplicity of apertures therein], each of the apertures being defined by a multiplicity of intersecting fiber-like elements interconnected to one another substantially in the plane of the first surface, the web as defined by each of the fiber-like elements exhibiting a cross-section comprising a base portion in the plane of the first surface and a sidewall portion joined [to each edge of] the base portion, the sidewall portions extending generally in the direction of the second surface of the web, the [intersecting] sidewall portions being interconnected to one another intermediate the first and the second surfaces of the web[, the] to form interconnected sidewall portions terminating substantially concurrently with one another in [the] a plane [of] defined by the second surface[.-dimensional web exhibiting a fiber-like appearance and tactile impression]; and separating the web into individual pieces of material of a size appropriate for a wrapping element.

55. (Amended) A method of making a tampon comprising the steps of:

separating a cover from a supply of a resilient three-dimensional web exhibiting a fiber-like appearance and tactile impression,

the web comprising fluid-impervious plastic material which comprises a laminate having at least three layers:

a first outer layer[, forming a first outer surface of the laminate,] comprising a blend of at least two thermoplastic polymeric components, a continuous phase of a first thermoplastic polymeric component that exhibits a first melting point temperature and a dispersed phase of an immiscible, second thermoplastic polymeric component that exhibits a second melting point temperature, less than the first melting point temperature, such that when the web is heated to a temperature between the first melting point temperature and the second melting point temperature, the second thermoplastic polymeric component is capable of forming an adhesive bond;

a second outer layer [forming a second outer surface of the laminate], opposite the first outer [surface] layer, comprising a blend of at least two thermoplastic polymeric components, a continuous phase of a first thermoplastic polymeric component that exhibits a first melting point temperature and a dispersed phase of an immiscible, second thermoplastic polymeric component that exhibits a second melting point temperature, less than the first melting point temperature, such that when the web is heated to a temperature between the first



melting point temperature and the second melting point temperature, the second thermoplastic polymeric component is capable of forming an adhesive bond; and at least one intermediate layer, disposed between the first and second outer layers; and

the web has first and second surfaces, the first surface defining a plane having a multiplicity of apertures therein and being defined at least in part by [the either] one of the first and second layers [and having a multiplicity of apertures therein], each of the apertures being defined by a multiplicity of intersecting fiber-like elements interconnected to one another substantially in the plane of the first surface, the web as defined by each of the fiber-like elements exhibiting a cross-section comprising a base portion in the plane of the first surface and a sidewall portion joined [to each edge of] the base portion, the sidewall portions extending generally in the direction of the second surface of the web, the [intersecting] sidewall portions being interconnected to one another intermediate the first and the second surfaces of the web[, the] to form interconnected sidewall portions terminating substantially concurrently with one another in [the] a plane [of] defined by the second surface;

substantially enclosing an absorbent structure with the cover; and

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applying thermal energy to the cover to heat it to a temperature between the first melting point temperature and the second melting point temperature of the first layer to form an adhesive bond.

